

*D*ance *I*ndex

Le Quatuor danse à Londres

PAR



Taglioni, Charlotte Crisi,
Cerrito et Fanny Elsler.



Frontispiece: Fanny Cerrito, ca. 1855 - 60 (see page 121).

Dance Index

Founders

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN
BAIRD HASTINGS
PAUL MAGRIEL

Editor

DONALD WINDHAM

Comment

The bouquet of varia presented in this issue has been culled from the collection of Joseph Cornell whose preoccupation with the Romantic period was stimulated by the foundation of the Dance Archives (now The Dance and Theatre Collection of The Museum of Modern Art), especially in its beautifully arranged and, to him, truly englamoured inaugural exhibition. Mr. Cornell's montage covers are already familiar to our readers as are his creative "constructions" to frequenters of art galleries and museums.

We believe that all of the material presented in this issue, with an obvious exception or two, appears in print for the first time since the revival of interest in the Romantic Era. And in this respect it is in direct line with the purpose of DANCE INDEX in adding to the growing store of informa-

tion continually being unearthed by devotees of the dance.

We wish to acknowledge with thanks the permission of Little Brown and Company to use Emily Dickinson's poem "I cannot dance upon my toes" reprinted from "Further Poems of Emily Dickinson" edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson; and the permission of Random House and The Modern Library to reprint a passage from the story "The Poet" in Isak Dinesen's book, "Seven Gothic Tales."

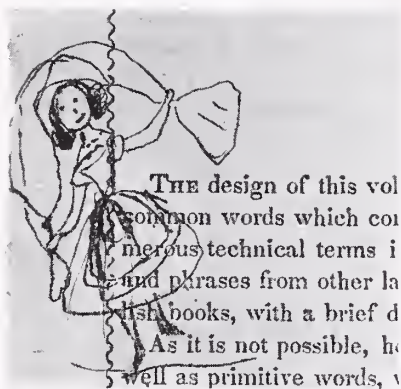
* * *

DANCE INDEX is gathering information for a complete catalogue of dance films, both theatrical and ethnological, and, as many of these are in private collections, requests that everyone possessing information concerning them get in touch with us. Thank you.

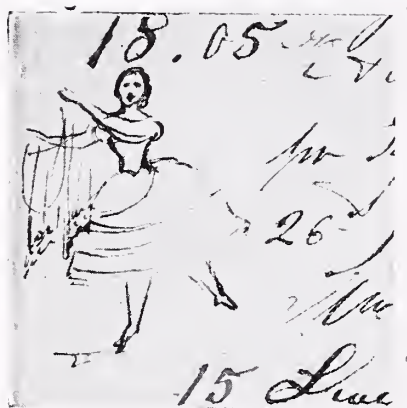
Subscription: 25c a month; \$2.50 by the year Double issue 50c.

Copyright 1944, Dance Index—Ballet Caravan, Inc., 637 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

Vol. III, Nos. 7, 8. July, August, 1944.



American "doodle" drawing (ca. 1850)

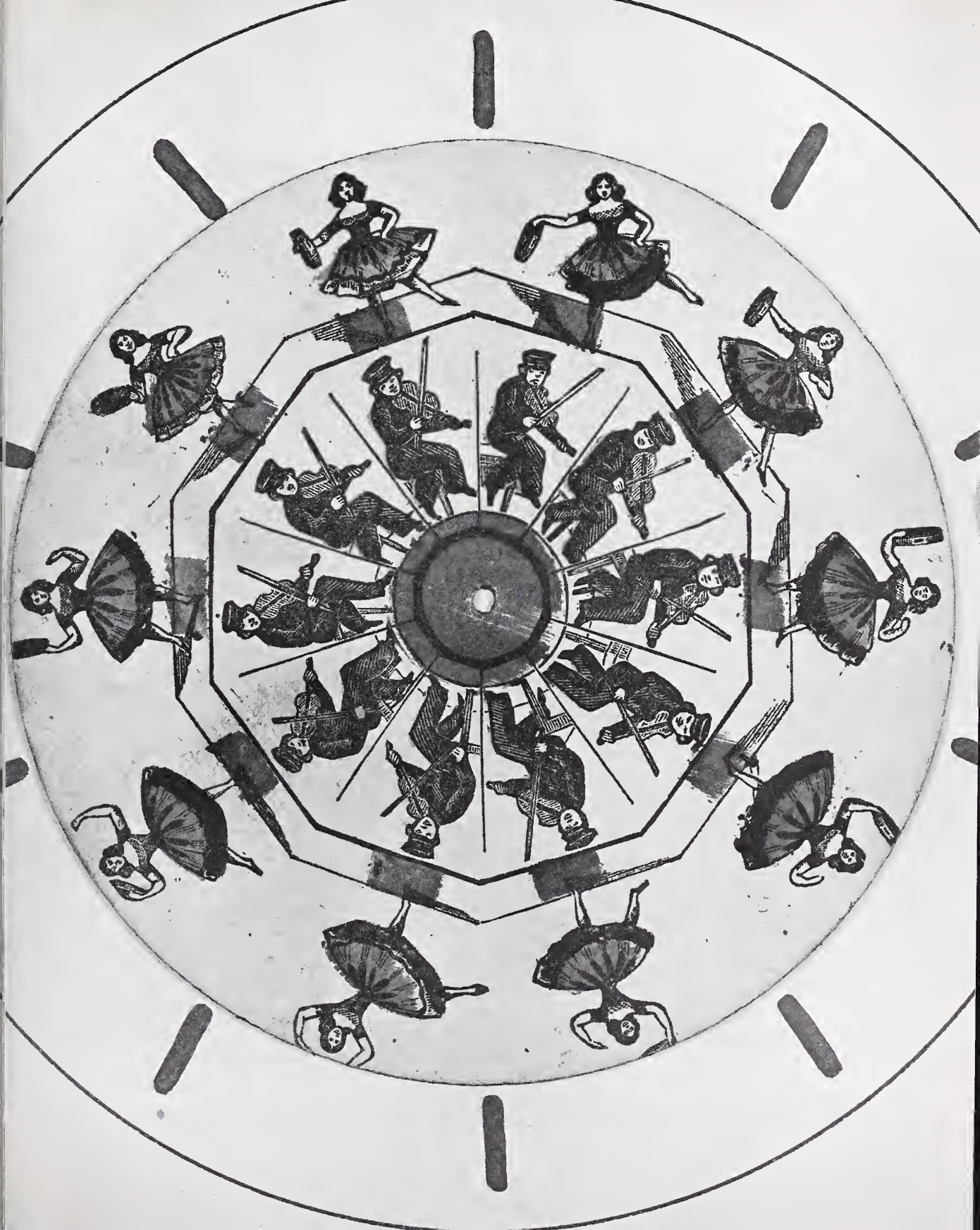


American "doodle" drawing (ca. 1860)

I CANNOT dance upon my toes,
 No man instructed me,
 But often times among my mind
 A glee possesseth me
 That had I ballet knowledge
 Would put itself abroad
 In pirouette to blanch a troupe,
 Or lay a Prima mad!
 And though I had no gown of gauze,
 No ringlet to my hair,
 Nor hopped for audiences like birds,
 One claw upon the air,—
 Nor tossed my shape in
 Eider balls,
 Nor rolled on wheels of snow
 Till I was out of sight in sound,
 The house encored me so—
 Nor any knew I know the art
 I mention easy here—
 Nor any placard boast me,
 It's full as opera!

Emily Dickinson

OPPOSITE PAGE: Colored phenakistoscope disk from THE MAGIC WHEEL, an American philosophical toy of the Civil War period. One of a series boxed with holder and mask, the effect of motion being obtained by spinning disk on holder and viewing through apertures in mask the reflection of the figures in a mirror. Same principle as the better known zoëtrope.



Carlotta as Falling Angel

And then, my excellent friend, let me suggest that you only attempt to execute the marvellous leap made, night after night, by Carlotta in the Ballet of the "Peri." Certainly, you may leave grace out of the question. That I will not require from you. But make the attempt, and if you do not break your leg, or dislocate your neck, or sprain your ankle, or produce some compound fracture or other, you will be a devilish clever fellow. . . .

Let me tell you a little tale, which I chance to have the best of reasons for knowing to be a fact. It touches on this very bound, to which I have alluded, in the Ballet of the "Peri."

Think first, what a wonderful leap it really is. Over the summit of a painted waterfall which is twenty feet in height, at the very least, this marvellous ball of feathers springs into the arms of her saltatory admirer. Here she poises on one foot, as he bends either through admiration of her supposed loveliness, or the actual weight of her body, almost to the ground, in the effort to support her. At her first appearance in London, the first male dancer's rôle was in the hands of Petipas,—a pleasant and agreeable young man who figured in the last French Revolution but two—and who was also the principal male in the Ballet at the French Opera.

The "Peri" was produced at Drury Lane Theatre, with the most remarkable success. Carlotta saved Bunn from closing his doors that season. On the third night that it was given, Petipas however failed in the endeavor to retain Carlotta in his arms, when she bounded into them. She did not actually fall, but reeled from him, down the whole length of the stage, at that time the largest in London, until she at length managed to stop, staggering and close to the foot-lights. The gentleman in the orchestra who played the double-bass and wore a pair of green spectacles, started back in horror as that vision, in white muslin and silken fleshings, appeared above him. No sooner, however, had Carlotta recovered from the surprise and fright, occasioned by this mishap, than agitated as she was, she went up to and spoke merely for a moment or two, with the Conductor. The music recommenced, immediately, at that part of the Ballet, anterior to this daring bound. She said a few words to Petipas, and was then leaving the stage for the purpose of repeating it, when a simultaneous roar burst from every part of the House.

"No! no! no!" "You shall not repeat it!" "Bravo! "Bravo!" "You're a brave girl." "Go on with the Ballet!" "We will not have it again!"

And I am ashamed to say a rough voice shouted out from the gallery: "Better give Petipas a glass of grog. He's shaky on the pins."

Carlotta looked round the House, astonished. This was not, however, at the observation from the gallery—for she did not understand at this period, one word of English—and gazed pleadingly upon the faces of the audience. She was then vehemently applauded, and during this, the Conductor, rose beckoned her towards him, and explained what the clamor meant. Almost scarlet she flushed in one moment with surprise and gratitude—pressed her hands upon her heart, and then vanished. In five minutes more, she had repeated that daring bound. Petipas succeeded in catching her, although I saw him shaking like an aspen, while he was waiting for her appearance over the top of the cataract, and then the audience rose to their feet, and gave her three decided cheers—such cheers as are seldom or never given in any Theatre.

Bunn had previously presented me to Carlotta, and in the course of the following morning I called upon her. Naturally enough, I alluded to the courage she had shown on the preceding evening.

"And, do you really call that courage?" she asked with a curious smile. "Very certainly I do," was my answer.

"Ah!" she said, shaking her head "you are very good—very good, indeed."

She then told me that the same chance, in this very leap, had occurred at Paris, on the tenth or eleventh representation of the Ballet. There, however, the audience had actually hissed her and Petipas, and she had been compelled by them to repeat this bound three times, before they condescended to applaud her.

"You Have Heard of Them" by Q



Carlotta as Equestrienne

I remember elegant Carlotta Grisi the dancer as a dazzling equestrienne in the Row, but I never saw her on the stage. . . . But though Fanny Elssler, Perrot, Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi were only names to me (as a boy, I remember I was as utterly astonished at Carlotta' being able to ride, and actually cantering about the Row, just as any pretty lady might have done, one of my own cousins, for example, and with nice people, too, as was innocent Mr. Pickwick when Sergeant Buzfuz wished Sergeant Snubbin "a good morning," . . .)

"Records & Reminiscences" by Sir Francis C. Burnand

Two Ballets Carlotta Never Graced

"Vabre translated aloud to me, book in hand, passages from 'Hamlet,' 'Othello,' and 'King Lear,' with a local savour, an accuracy of expression, and a penetration of the meaning which made them sound wholly new to me. I also heard him explain—with a view to composing a ballet—to Carlotta Grisi, who was then dancing in London, 'The Tempest' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in the most poetic and ingenious fashion. If the proposed ballets had been written, the parts of Miranda and Titania would have been thoroughly understood by their lovely interpreter."

"The Miraculous Comrade"—Théophile Gautier



Popular illustration to "The Tempest"



The Chevalier Wikoff* Unrolls the Carpet for Mdlle. Elssler's Departure for America



I have indulged in this explanatory prelude to show what a puppet is a human being in the hands of Fate, and that, in spite of his will or wishes, a man may be suddenly precipitated into a position diametrically opposed to his views, and wholly unforeseen in his wildest fancies. This was just my unlucky experience, as the following narrative will prove. From a friendly motive I was drawn into a connection that finally enveloped me like a net, and neither caution or apprehension prevented my becoming an instrument in an enterprise in which not only I had no interest, but every inducement to evade. The comical part of it was that it scattered to the winds my love of privacy, to say nothing of my craving for high respectability.

It was a lovely morning in July, and I was absorbed in a speech of Burke's, when the door of my library was thrown open, and the servant announced, 'Mr. Stephen Price.' I jumped up in surprise, exclaiming,

'My dear Price, delighted to see you! When did you come to Paris? You are the last man I expected to meet'

My visitor took no notice of my gushing welcome, but, deliberately depositing his hat and stick on a table, sat down in his gruff way, and looked me steadily in the face. There was something in his eyes and manner that indicated a settled purpose of some sort. I have already described him as an oddity, and I always dreaded any collision, knowing his arbitrary temper.

'I have come here expressly to see you,' he began. 'Don't interrupt me; I want to ask a service. You are just the man for my project.'

'It will give me the greatest pleasure to oblige you,' I said, without hesitation.

'I am utterly ruined, on the verge of bankruptcy,' he continued, without change of countenance.

'I am deeply shocked to hear it,' I added, not a little moved.

'Now listen to me,' he said emphatically. 'I have hit on a plan to retrieve my fortunes. I want to engage Fanny Elssler for my theatre in New York for forty-nights. I will give her half the houses, less the expenses. This ought to put 30,000 dollars in my pocket, which will tide me over my difficulties. Will you aid me?'

I was astounded at the proposition, and felt inclined to reject it instantly. Yet his situation touched me. After pondering a moment, I said,

* "Another companion, somewhat mysterious was a M. Wikoff, mentioned by Catherine Prinster in ambiguous terms. She presents him as a chaperone engaged in good and due form but leaving us in doubt as to his exact status. Americans were scandalized at the spectacle of this "chevalier attendant" following so closely in the train of this famous woman. One paper, the "Corsaire," became the mouthpiece of outraged decency. 'Why,' it asked, 'Is she still called Fanny Elssler? She is no longer Fanny Elssler, but Mme. W.' . . . It was even said that she had disappeared from Philadelphia, kidnapped by this M. W. . . . The "Courrier de New York" protested against all these rumors. Fanny Elssler, it said emphatically, 'is not Mme. W. . . . at all, the way that some of her miserable detractors imagine. M. W.'s relation to her is traveling companion, a special friend to whom she has entrusted herself in coming to a strange land, and who discharges the obligations of that confidence with all the refinement of a gentleman and with a purity of affection which only perverted minds can fail to recognize as disinterested!

"And who would wish to be put down as a perverted mind or question the spotless innocence of M. Wikoff, so correctly vouched for by this paper?"

Fanny Elssler by Auguste Ehrhard Paris 1909.

'She would be as likely to embark for the moon as go to to America. The one she has seen, but probably never heard of the other. Besides, the director of the Opera would oppose it desperately. Moreover, I don't know her.'

Clouds gathered on his brow, and he replied, in a testy tone,

'These obstacles could be overcome if you desired to serve me. Do you refuse?'

'No,' I answered blandly; 'but I would like to think it over.'

'No time for that,' he replied, rising. 'I must return to London at once. I am in great trouble. May I rely upon you?'

'Yes. What can I do?'

'Get me an interview with Fanny Elssler,' he demanded. 'After that I will leave the negotiation in your hands.'

'Fortunately,' I remarked, 'I know the Marquis de Lavalette, the chief adviser of the brilliant artist. If I get his adhesion, it will facilitate matters.'

'If you wish it,' he added, 'I will ask my friend Frank Corbin to assist you.'

'Do so, it may be useful; but I will see the Marquis to-day, and send you his impression. I trust, for your sake, he will not oppose the project.'

'You understand me,' he persisted. 'The engagement is vital to my interests. I count on your influence and tact. Will you help me?' and he took me nervously by the hand.

'I will do my best to accomplish your object,' I assured him earnestly.

He went away, and left me quite bewildered. I regarded the job with repugnance. Yet what could I do? The appeal was from an old man, in broken health and stricken by misfortune. He had lavished hospitality on me without stint in London. Should I withhold my hand in an emergency like this? It would have been unfeeling to do so.

I started off instantly to the Jockey Club to hunt up the Marquis de Lavalette, who was the presiding genius of that fashionable resort. This gentleman was a descendant of an old family and a member of the Diplomatic Corps, which did not prevent him dabbling in theatricals, leading an active club life, and giving much attention to the turf. He was a handsome man of thirty-three, of pleasing and distinguished manners, remarkable for acuteness of mind, and withal so energetic in purpose that he rarely failed in what he undertook. Activity and tact were his salient traits. He was a great authority in the artistic world, and all-potential with the peerless *danseuse*. I broached to him the scheme of Mr. Price, and, to my surprise, he favoured it. I learned his reasons later. After a chat, he said,

'Come with your friend to-morrow at two P.M. to the residence of Mdlle. Elssler, and I will present you.'

I wrote promptly to the manager to join me before the designated hour, which he did, and we drove off to our rendez-vous in the Rue Lafitte.

Mdlle. Elssler occupied the chief part of a mansion in this central position, and mounting to the *premier* we passed through several richly-furnished rooms, and were ushered into her boudoir, where we found the Marquis in earnest parley with the *diva* of the dance.

She received us with exceeding courtesy, and the conversation forthwith began. The Marquis spoke English perfectly, and translated at intervals to the lady what passed between him and Mr. Price. The length of the engagement proposed, the time, and the terms were all fully discussed; and whilst this was going on I had abundant opportunity to contemplate this celebrated woman. I was struck by her quiet lady-like appearance. She was above medium height, and divinely formed, as I had often seen on the stage. Her features were well shaped, and the eyes of dark gray, wonderfully soft and gentle. Her head was beautifully shaped, the countenance singularly sweet and winning. The voice, too, was low and musical. Every movement was the incarnation of grace. What puzzled me was that so meek and placid a creature should have made such a *furor* in Europe, on and off the stage. One would have supposed, from her retiring air and modest deportment, that she had been reared in a convent, or had budded in some 'cool sequestered vale,' far away from the haunts of men and the purlieus of the opera-house. Could she be as innocent and confiding as she looked? Had the admiration of suitors, the enthusiasm of multitudes, the homage of princes, fallen unnoticed on the ground? Could she have walked, or rather danced, over so many hot ploughshares without scorching her tiny feet? Was it possible to live in the malarious atmosphere in which she had been bred, and preserve purity of mind, goodness of heart, and sincerity of character? It seemed to me well-nigh incredible. During the colloquy of the Marquis and my friend Price she rarely spoke, simply nodding her head as the main points were interpreted, whilst I busied myself with the reflections just expressed. At the close Mr. Price said he must return forthwith to London, and would leave me to arrange the details, if Mdlle. Elssler accepted the engagement.

'A mighty simple unpretending sort of a body,' observed the manager, as we wended our way homewards. 'I expected something very different. I fancy she is quite under the tutelage of the Marquis. If you win him over, you'll have little trouble with her, I feel sure.'

'Just as I told you,' was my reply.

'Well, the affair begins favourably,' he remarked. 'I am off tonight. All now depends on you, and if you succeed I shall be profoundly grateful. I have no other hope.'

'I shall not fail for want of effort,' I answered, 'and begin to feel more sanguine.'

He shook me cordially by the hand at parting, and said all he could to stimulate my zeal.

I was now resolved to go on with this business, which at first awakened my dread. It was quite out of my line, and might involve unpleasant associations. But the embarrassed situation of my friend, who gave me fuller details than related, aroused my sympathies, whilst the pleasing well-bred demeanour of Mdlle. Elssler diminished many objections.

* * *

'You must see Mdlle. Elssler as often as convenient,' he said, 'and remove her apprehensions of so perilous an enterprise, as she regards it. Already the interested and ignorant people about her are describing the risks and terrors of the barbarousland she talks of visiting. They tell her it is filled with savages and wild beasts, and I daresay they think so. They declare her graceful art would be derided and denounced, and that if she ventured to show her ankles, much more her legs, an outcry of horror would be raised, and she would probably be prosecuted for indecency. You must undertake to disabuse her mind of these absurdities, which she hardly knows whether to believe or not; and if you find her tractable, we will then set to work at the engagement.'

This was the substance of several conversations with the Marquis, and I cheerfully agreed to enter the lists against the defamers of the state and refinement of my maligned country.

I called occasionally on the famous *danseuse*, and was invariably charmed by her affability and elegance. I could not question her natural intelligence; but it was blended with an ingenuousness very rare in the world, and still more on the stage. It was long before I could be convinced that this was all genuine, and not merely the skilful dissimulation of a consummate actress. I ridiculed the amusing fabrications of her visitors respecting the *sauvagerie* of the United States, and guaranteed her a reception that would throw the enthusiasm of other countries she had vanquished into the shade. Such art as hers, I assured her, had never been seen there, and, united with so much beauty and grace, would be quite a revelation, that would yield results in fame and profit beyond her most sanguine calculations. By degrees she seemed to give me her confidence; for, though artless by disposition, her experience had taught her caution, and she felt doubt more than suspicion of the motives of men.

As might have been foreseen, the Marquis de L. had a tough job in seeking to overcome the obstinate resistance of the new director of the Opera, M. Duponchel, to part for even a limited period with one of his greatest attractions; and as the struggle was likely to last for some weeks I determined on a brief excursion to London, to look up some of my old friends I knew were residing in the vicinity.

A fortnight soon vanished in skipping about to various villas in the environs of London, and intercourse with the hospitable, sociable English, always unaffected and natural, I soon discovered had lost none of its attractions. I dined one day in town with Mr. Price, who was full of nervous anxiety about the engagement of Mdlle. Elssler for New York; but I bade him be of good cheer, as I thought the prospect of success was brightening steadily. He pressed me to return to Paris, lest some hitch might ensue from my absence, and I was on the point of yielding to his solicitations, when a kind invitation came from Lady Blessington to join her party for a few days on the seacoast of Sussex. I could not resist this tempting opportunity to enjoy in the solitude of the country, away from the glare and rattle of the town, the society of this very fascinating woman.

* * *

Soon after my return to Paris I met the Marquis de Lavalette, who told me with lively satisfaction that, after much difficulty, he had obtained for Mdlle. Elssler a *congé* of six months, which would enable her to make the voyage to America. He proposed, therefore, to commence forthwith the discussions respecting her engagement, and we had repeated interviews to that effect. By the end of September we had settled all the necessary details, and the covenant was drawn up in due form. Without copying the clauses, the agreement especially bound Mdlle. Fanny Elssler to be at New York in the beginning of April 1840, and to play and dance at the Park Theatre for thirty-six nights, to the end of June ensuing. Further, it was stipulated that the receipts for each night were to be equally divided between the said Price and the said Elssler, after a deduction of 150 dollars per night, save on her benefit-nights, when the receipts were to be divided without any deduction.

On the 8th of October the Marquis and I repaired to the abode of Mdlle. Elssler to sign the important document, big with the fate of the New York Park Theatre. I appended my name on behalf of my principal, Price; Fanny affixed hers with a sort of trepidation; and the Marquis signed as witness. So the die was cast. Fanny Elssler was now bound to Transatlantic eyes her splendid feats and magnificent person, or pay a heavy forfeit; whilst my friend Price could reasonably expect to meet all his obligations and set the demon of bankruptcy at defiance.

I mused for some time over the singular position in which I found myself. Here was I saddled with the supervision of the peerless Fanny Elssler; constituted by her own wish, and at the entreaty of her confidential friend, her chief adviser. It was flattering enough to have the exclusive charge of such a lovely woman, the idol of Paris; but might it not involve me in a vortex of demoralising occupations wholly foreign to my life, and in conflict with my aforesaid notions of respectability? It is true I had a decided bias for the theatrical profession, and counted many of its members among my esteemed friends. Yet hitherto I had to do chiefly with its male representatives, and had but little intimacy with the heroines of the stage. Whether that was accident, or whether I dreaded the danger of such seductive contact, I know not, but up to this time it had not occurred. It was passing strange that I had been suddenly converted into the confidant, not only of a female artist, but of a *danseuse*, whose fascinations had turned so many heads. I feared I was on an inclined plane, and that if I did not look carefully after my foothold I might be launched into unknown perplexities. At all events, by the terms of her contract, the fair Fanny would be compelled to leave Paris in three or four months, when I should be restored to my former status of a man of leisure. Meanwhile, my sympathy for the embarrassed Price stimulated me to prevent any obstacles arising that might impede her departure. I did not fancy the new line of business in which I had got entangled, but it was no small comfort to feel sure that my probation could not extend over many weeks.

I had kept up a steady correspondence with Mr. Price since his departure for New York. He continued to feel anxious as to the fulfilment of Mdlle. Elssler's engagement, upon which his fortunes depended. I informed him immediately of the signing of the contract, and assured him of my belief of its being duly carried out. The opposition to Fanny's departure from Paris seemed to increase every day, inside and outside the opera house. The public were indignant at the loss of their favourite, whilst the director of the Opera, more alive than ever to her immense popularity, began to exert his utmost influence to induce her to abandon her project. He offered at last, if she would throw over her contract, to pay all the damages, and to augment her salary besides. The most ingenious manoeuvres, the most unscrupulous intrigues, were resorted to, but in vain. The upright Fanny stood her ground firmly, resisting blandishments and defying auguries alike.

In my letters I had acquainted Mr. Price of all the artifices and crafty devices employed to defeat Fanny's American expedition, and in one of his replies from New York, dated towards the end of December, he wrote to the following effect:

My dear Wikoff,—I have received your letter of Nov. 30 by the 'Great Western,' and sincerely thank you for the trouble you have taken and the friendly interest you manifest in my affairs. The schemes to which you allude to obstruct Elssler's departure are no doubt quite new to you; but I have seen too much of actors and dancers not to understand their manoeuvres, and to be able to explain them to you. Augusta (a popular *danseuse*), of course, wants to prevent Elssler coming to New York. And why? Augusta has been a great favourite here, and intends soon to return; but if Elssler arrives, then Augusta will do no good by coming, as she will be of little importance to the audiences which have once admired Elssler. Now, if she could persuade Elssler not to come, and so keep a dangerous rival out of the field, the harvest would be all her own. Taglioni's sister-in-law will play the same game. She and her husband Paul left here last September, giving out to friends and managers their intention to return next July. Should Elssler come meanwhile, their attraction would be ruined; and they have therefore the same motives as Augusta in striving by all means to prevent it. So much for Augusta's and Taglioni's little games, and I hope Elssler has too much sagacity to be entrapped by them.

The effect of the various bank suspensions has produced much general distress and confusion in New York. The depreciation of their paper, with the adherence to specie payments, has caused money to be very scarce. The theatres have felt the pressure very severely, and, as might have been expected, Wallack has given up, after compelling his friend and moneyed supporter, Wash. Coster, to sell off furniture, plate, horses, and everything tangible, and to make an assignment of his real estate, to avoid the effect of executions for the amount—said to be enormous—of his sureties and indorsements for Wallack. The boasted success of the National has been mere deception. Every week it was open the loss only increased, and, even with the low portion of the press to bolster him up, he is at this moment helpless. His immense debts, here and in England, must be cleared off before he can start again; and he will then be fortunate if, after numerous failures, he finds another fool to trust him.

You may rely upon my exertions to produce the ballets of Elssler to the very best effect; and if she will provide the music, and get the business well described, all shall be well got up. I will defray all the expenses. Urge her to be here as much before the 1st of April as possible. We shall be ready for her. Money affairs are slowly getting better, and everything reviving fast. There is *now* no opposition, and her success must be triumphant. The suggestion of securing Petipas, the male dancer, is good, and I have set my agents about effecting it. Don't allow Elssler to neglect sending the music-score for the orchestra, which I will pay for; or if you will advance the sum necessary, Mrs. Price

will repay you, or I will pay here to your order. I don't mean this to go beyond three or four ballets.

Forrest called on me to-day, and I delivered your message to him. And now, my dear Wikoff, I conclude this long scrawl by repeating to you that the execution of Elssler's agreement is to me *all-important*. I have relied upon it; have devoted an excellent part of my season to it; and without her I shall be unprovided. Let me hope you will not relax in your kind efforts to bring it about.—etc.

* * *

... As the time of her departure approached her preparations grew more active. She made extensive purchases of costumes, and ordered prodigious supplies of white-satin slippers for her ballets, of which she consumed two pairs a night. Her farewell houses at the Opera were crowded and enthusiastic, though the public were still sceptical of her bold design of going to America. Towards the end of January, M. Laporte came to Paris to engage her for a few nights at Her Majesty's Opera in London. As she felt herself incompetent to deal with so crafty a man of business, she referred him to me, as her confidential friend; and a contract was duly drawn up for her appearance thrice a week in London during the month of March; terms, 2500 francs each performance, to be paid the following morning. M. Laporte stickled at such prompt payment, but yielded. I was gradually getting immersed up to my eyes in Fanny's affairs, and began to long for her speedy exit from Paris.

* * *

As the London season was approaching, Mrs. Grote felt it necessary to bring her visit to Paris to a conclusion; and her reluctance to part with her beloved Fanny was less as she looked forward to meeting her soon again in London. Before she left she announced her intention to 'build up' a *soirée* in honour of her idol, as she desired some of her intimate friends to see what a charming person the celebrated dancer really was. She made no revelation to Fanny or to me as to the persons she had invited, but merely said they were very limited, and that all were desirous to meet the object of her predilection.

On entering her *salon* on the night in question, I was hardly less than astounded at sight of the extraordinary group Mrs. Grote had assembled for the occasion. I recognised the Count de Tocqueville, the illustrious author of *Democracy in America*, which had been universally pronounced the most remarkable book of the century, and had raised its writer to an immense eminence. Gustave de Beaumont, just elected a deputy, and who had been sent, in 1832, by the Government of the United States with M. de Tocqueville, to examine our penitentiary system, was another guest. His wife, a granddaughter of Lafayette, was also present. Victor Cousin, who had founded the new school of philosophy, and was considered the most gifted of contemporary writers, was talking with Mrs. Grote when I entered. There were two or three others of almost equal celebrity. Since the world began, I do not believe an opera-dancer ever found her way into such a circle as this. That was my inward conclusion when I had once looked round upon the gathering. I could not help regarding this as a most extraordinary freak of Mrs. Grote; but as she had notified her friends of the *treat* in store for them, they could not complain of being taken by surprise.

In chatting with M. de Tocqueville, who was a very sedate but soft-mannered man, he remarked, in an explanatory way: 'I have come with my wife to-night to bid good-bye to our esteemed friend Mrs. Grote, and she has asked permission to present to us her latest whim, in the shape of Fanny Elssler, the popular dancer. It seems to me Horace must have had in his eye just such a person as our friend when he wrote the phrase, *Nil fuit unquam sic impar sibi*, for, without knowing it, she is full of vagaries and strange inconsistencies. But she is a good-hearted creature, to say nothing of her extraordinary intellect; and it would have grieved her sorely if we had balked her fancy in not coming here. Besides, my wife was really curious to see this celebrated artist, of whom Mrs. Grote had related so many piquant stores.' Whilst we were still talking Mdlle. Fanny Elssler was announced, and every one turned round to contemplate her. She was simply attired in a robe of black velvet, and wore very little ornament. Her easy graceful manner, as she crossed the room to greet her hostess, charmed the company. If she had passed her whole life amid philosophers and members of the Institute, she could not have been more natural and unembarrassed, yet modest withal. Her engaging simplicity, repose, and elegance gradually won upon the sympathies of all, who found it difficult to reconcile their preconceived notions of the brilliant *danseuse* with the quiet unpretending person before them.

The conversation went on, and by degrees, to Mrs. Grote's great delight, one after another of the distinguished guests desired to make Fanny's acquaintance; and all found her in converse quite as charming as she looked. Cousin the philosopher, a sprightly and agreeable man, seemed especially captivated, and kept up a long and animated parley with her. It could not be questioned that Fanny had made a decided *hit* before an entirely new audience; and she could not have been more admired if, enveloped in the fleecy white drapery of La Tarentule, she had regaled the company with some

of those splendid evolutions and twinkling *petits pas* which were wont to throw the opera-house into spasms of delight. This was Fanny's first and last appearance before a conclave representing the highest regions of philosophy and literature; for shortly after, Mrs. Grote returned to London, and the artist went back to her familiar haunts and usual avocations, quite oblivious, probably unconscious, that she had bewitched a philosopher, or figured in the society of the *élite* of the world of letters.

Barely a week had elapsed after Fanny had taken wing, when a letter reached me from Philadelphia, announcing the sudden death of my guardian, Mr. S. P. Wetherill, and desiring my immediate return to take possession of my property, which had always remained in his hands. This melancholy event shocked me deeply, but I was actually dumbfounded it should have occurred at this precise juncture. I foresaw at a glance that if I left at once for America I could not possibly escape being more or less mixed up with Fanny's theatrical campaign. She would naturally appeal to me for assistance, and on what pretext could I refuse, after having so largely contributed to her going there at all? I thought, when she left Paris, my intervention in her affairs was at an end; but now, by a stroke of destiny wholly unforeseen, I was likely to be plunged into them deeper than ever. Thus it seemed that all my prudence, self-control, and laudable intentions were shivered to fragments by the iron mallet of fate, and no option left but to submit to events utterly beyond my command.

* * *

By this time my mind had calmed down, and I yielded pliantly to the inevitable. Without more ado, I secured a berth on the 'Great Western' steamer, to leave Bristol on April 15th. I wondered whether Fanny would go in this vessel or her rival, the 'British Queen,' from London. Perhaps she might not go at all.

* * *

I complied with Fanny's wish, and had a long chat with her in the afternoon. She was in ecstasies at my departure for America.

'To tell you the truth,' she confessed, 'as the moment approached my dread increased, and it appeared to me sheer insanity to start off alone to a foreign land so far away, whose language and customs I was ignorant of. I had almost resolved, in spite of ridicule and loss, to renounce the wild enterprise, when Mrs. Grote told me you were obliged to go home on pressing business. I was overjoyed at the intelligence, and now I look forward with delight to this strange and exciting expedition. All the Americans I have seen inspire me with confidence. They seem so frank, truthful, and deferential to women that I have fallen in love with their country before seeing it.'

* * *

I had just finished breakfast next morning when the waiter announced that a gentleman wished to see me immediately on business. I ordered him to be admitted; and in a few moments a stout man, done up in a spruce suit of black, with a large round visage and bright eye, entered the room. He handed me his card: 'Mr. H. Placide, of New York.' It was the inimitable actor of that name, and a person of great respectability.

'I thought I knew your face,' I said, 'but did not dream you were in London.'

'Just arrived,' he stated, 'and have been in pursuit of you ever since. I have brought a letter from Mr. Simpson, who sent me over,' and he handed it to me.

'I have been expecting it for some days,' I observed; and, with an 'Allow me,' broke it open and read as follows:

New York, March 19, 1846

Dear Sir, — Since I wrote you last I have received your favour informing me that you had signed an agreement with Mdlle. Elssler on my part, which I sincerely regret I cannot ratify. I was willing to take up Mr. Price's arrangement with her, and so offered; but certainly never would consent to her altering the time fixed for her appearing here, or making myself liable to a forfeit of 2500 dollars. Presuming that on Mdlle. Elssler's hesitation to accept the ratification of Mr. Price's engagement by me that she would decline coming altogether, I have made arrangements that will preclude the possibility of her beginning here before the 18th of May. That period is much too late; and for the sake of all parties I would advise her to remain in Europe till the next season. Mr. Placide will see you and the lady on the subject, and will make every arrangement necessary to that end. I sincerely regret the trouble you have had in this disagreeable business, and thank you most cordially for your kindness.—Very truly yours,

H. Wikoff, Esq.

E. SIMPSON.

Fanny's campaign was thus summarily disposed of till next year. It was a stroke of luck for me; but I knew it would be a cruel blow for her. Concealing my emotions, that were conflicting, I said, in a careless way:

'As Mr. Simpson rejects the contract I signed on his behalf, my function are at an end. It is idle to talk of Mdlle. Elssler's visit for next season, as it is out of the question.'

'Bless me!' exclaimed Mr. Placide, much astonished, 'why is that?'

'Simply,' I continued, 'because her leave of absence from the Opera expires in September, and cannot be renewed. She must go now, or never.'

'Good gracious! how unfortunate!' he returned. 'Mr. Simpson never anticipated such a difficulty; and you know it would be far better to begin in New York in September than the middle of May.'

'I grant it,' was my reply; 'but you see it is impossible.'

A pause ensued, whilst Simpson's ambassador pondered deeply. At last, raising his head, he asked:

'What's to be done? I can arrange nothing, save for next season.'

'I will see Mdle. Elssler and her advisers,' I informed him, 'and write to you to-morrow. However, the business, it strikes me, is at an end.'

He thanked me, and went away much perplexed.

I drove straightway to Mrs. Grote.

'I have news at last,' I said on entering her boudoir, 'but ruinous for Fanny.'

I handed her Simpson's letter, which she perused eagerly.

'It is crushing, indeed,' she ejaculated, looking quite distressed. 'It will almost break her heart, she is so deeply committed and has spent so much money. Is there no remedy, no loophole?'

'I ought to be content,' I replied, 'with the turn affairs have taken, for it frees me from all contingencies; but I find my sympathies stronger than my discretion.'

'You are not the *preux chevalier* I took you for, if that were not the case.'

'I have thought it all over,' I continued, 'and Fanny must be saved.'

'But how?'

'I will see Mrs. Price and secure her adhesion. A new contract must then be drawn up, guaranteeing fifteen or twenty performances, during May and June, in New York. We will all combine and make Simpson's agent sign this, which will bind his principal.'

'That will do admirably,' cried Mrs. Grote, elated. 'I will draw up the engagement at once. You see Mrs. Price; she is most anxious to have Fanny go, and will bring all her influence to bear.'

'For goodness' sake,' I entreated, 'not a syllable to Fanny of what has happened. It would worry her dreadfully, and she has need of all her strength. For the last three months she has been under a tremendous strain of mind and body.'

'No, not a syllable till something is decided,' said Mrs. G. compassionately. 'Poor dear thing! It would break her down, I am sure.'

I had a long chat with Mrs. Price, who was in terror at the engagement falling through, as she expected a considerable sum from it as lessee of the theatre. She adopted my plan readily, and said she would sign if Placide refused.

'Yet,' I said, 'Simpson is *locum tenens*,' which I explained to her, 'and I prefer the signature of his agent.'

'Then,' she declared energetically, 'we must make him sign.'

I proposed she should write to Placide to meet us both at Mrs. Grote's house the next day, at two o'clock, which she undertook. I wrote to Mrs. Grote of the rendezvous arranged, and she reported the contract was ready.

We all met, as agreed, and a tedious sitting we had of it. Placide was conscientious, careful, and even timid. He had the greatest dread or exceeding his authority, and of 'putting his foot in it,' as he phrased it.

'I know,' he stated, 'that Mr. Simpson has made arrangements for May and June; and how can he get out of them?'

'Buy out,' I suggested; it would not cost much; and let the expense be divided between him, Mrs. Price, and Mdle. Elssler.'

'I consent,' said Mrs. Price promptly.

'I see,' continued Placide, much bothered, 'the contract says we must provide a *corps de ballet*. We have no such thing, and don't know what it is.'

We all laughed at this candid sally.

'Then,' I added, 'Mdle. Elssler must manufacture one on the spot.'

'But, believe me,' persisted the nervous delegate, 'the result is doubtful: business is so bad in New York—no money in the country.'

'Fudge!' contended Mrs. Grote. 'Fanny will dance everything to rights again. Go and see her; I'll give you a stall.'

After some two hours the anxious agent was badgered into signing the agreement, when he sat down, took out his bandana (as big as a flag), and sopped the perspiration streaming in torrents down his honest face.

Only three days remained before my departure, and every minute was mortgaged.

On Saturday night Fanny made her farewell appearance. It was a scene of splendour and excitement I never saw equalled. The young Queen and her handsome husband and suite were there. Prince Louis Napoleon and *entourage* occupied a conspicuous box. The house was densely packed, and the prices demanded were unprecedented.

The enthusiasm knew no bounds. Poor Fanny was called on incessantly, and almost smothered under bouquets and wreaths. She seemed quite affected by the demonstrations. As the curtain fell at the close the occupants of the 'omnibus box,' Count D'Orsay, Lord Chesterfield, Sir George Wombwell, and others, cried out repeatedly, '*Bon voyage! Bon voyage!*'

I began on Sunday morning by breakfasting with Mr. R. M. Milnes at his quarter in Pall Mall. He was a member of Parliament, but more celebrated in literature. He had written several poems of striking merit that are destined to live. He was bland in address, and most impressive in conversation. On my return to the hotel, I found Placide anxiously waiting for me. He said he had received unexpected news from New York, that would doubtless be most unpleasant to Mdlle. Elssler and her friends.

'Indeed!' I interjected; 'and what may it be?'

'I had a letter,' he continued, 'last night from Mr. Simpson, who says the business was so bad, he had closed the theatre, and dismissed his company.'

This was a thunder-clap, and for a moment I was silent.

'You remember,' he added, 'I said it was wiser to adjourn the affair till September. It would be rank folly for Mdlle. Elssler to begin in May; and, financially, the time is most unpropitious. However, it is out of the question *now*.'

'I see it is,' I slowly replied; 'and perhaps it is all for the best.'

'Will you kindly convey the facts to Miss Fanny and Mrs. Grote?'

'I will.'

'And should you feel disposed to draw up another contract for next season, I shall be happy to call.'

'I will let you know,' were my last words as he bade me good-morning.

I sat me down and examined the situation calmly, but fully. For weeks the papers of Paris and London had discussed Fanny's visit to the United States. She had obtained six months' leave from the



Opera, and had nearly drained her purse in preparations. Worse than all, her mind was so set upon it, and her feelings so stirred by the reception she was told awaited her in New York, that a collapse now would be an overwhelming shock. At all events, I was completely emancipated by Simpson's act of shutting up shop, and could now go tranquilly home, transact my business, and return to Paris and my old haunts. What should I do? I asked myself over and over again, as I paced up and down my room. 'Shall I leave Fanny to her fate and her tears? Can there be a doubt of her success, even in the month of May, and with trade languishing?' This was the vital point. 'No,' I exclaimed, after deep rumination, 'not a shadow of doubt. If this opportunity is lost, she will forfeit a large sum and immense prestige.' And the widow of my old friend, Mrs. Price, who counted anxiously on the gains of Fanny's engagement. At last I gave way to my feelings, not knowing or caring what it might cost. It was rash; but young men, especially of the sentimental sort, will commit follies.

Putting on my hat, I drove off to Tavistock-square.

'Do you know the Park Theatre is closed?' I asked Mrs. Price.

'Placide has told me so,' she responded, 'and I am grieved beyond measure.'

'Will you put it in my hands?' I demanded. 'I will pay anything in reason.'

'Cheerfully,' she said, astonished. 'But what do you mean?'

'I mean to take Fanny over on Wednesday's steamer, appoint a manager when I arrive, and open the house.'

'Capital!' she cried, delighted. 'Will she go without an engagement? I fear not.'

'I will not tell her what has happened,' I said. 'I will take her hazard and pay the loss, if there be any. Not a word to Fanny nor to Mrs. Grote, still less to Placide. There is no time to wrangle. The day after to-morrow we must leave.'

'Not a word,' she promised emphatically. 'It might spoil all.'

'Then meet me at Paddington Station on Tuesday at nine A. M.,' I proposed, 'and we will all start together. I am sanguine.'

'So am I,' she asserted, and her eyes sparkled at the venture.

Women always like a risk. I called on Fanny in the afternoon. I thought it best to sound her. I might, even in my desire to serve her, go too far. She received me with heartiness, but blamed me for neglecting her.

'You hardly know how busy I have been,' I replied. 'I come now to make a reconnaissance. How are your nerves? Are you ready for the jump? On Tuesday we are off for America.'

'Yes,' she declared, her face flushing; 'my heart bounds at the thought. I am eager for the hour of departure.'

* * *

We embarked on a lovely morning, April 15th . . . A chill shot through me with the first turn of the wheels, as our gallant craft moved off. I felt I was taking a leap in the dark, and if I had known the precise habitation of my guardian angel, I would have sent thither a strong appeal to guide my faltering steps.

(From the memories of Henry Wikoff)



The portraits surrounding the original photograph on the opposite page are taken from a libelous collection of caricatures entitled "The Sad Tale of the Courtship of the Chevalier Slyfox Wikoff" published by Dick & Fitzgerald, New York City.

Ideal Portraits of the Chevalier Wikoff



What the Picayune knows
the Chevalier to be like.



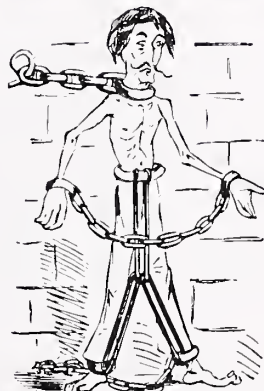
What the London Times
says he is like—a Russian
Spy.



What a respectable Father
of a family declares he is
like—a bold marauder mak-
ing off with his female prey
on his shoulders—in his
arms, with the divine Fan-
ny cutting a pirouette on
his head.



What his lady Love wishes him to be like.



What the boarding-school
Miss dreams him like—an
Italian Brigand.



What the diplomats of Eu-
rope think he is like—a
Cute Yankee.



What the lady of fashion
fancies he is like—a second
Sir Harcourt Courtley.

“LA JOLIE BAYADERE DE 1832”



I went last night to the French opera, to see the first dancer of the world. The prodigious enthusiasm about her, all over Europe, had, of course, raised my expectations to the highest possible pitch. “Have you seen Taglioni?” is the first question addressed to a stranger in Paris; and you hear her name constantly over all the hum of the *cafés* and in the crowded resorts of fashion. The house was overflowed. The king and his numerous family were present; and my companion pointed out to me many of the nobility, whose names and titles have been made familiar to our ears by the innumerable private memoirs and autobiographies of the day. After a little introductory piece, the king arrived, and, as soon as the cheering was over, the curtain drew up for “*Le Dieu et la Bayadère*.” This is the piece in which Taglioni is most famous. She takes the part of a dancing girl, of whom the Bramah and an Indian prince are both enamored; the former in the disguise of a man of low rank at the court of the latter, in search of some

one whose love for him shall be disinterested. The disguised god succeeds in winning her affection, and, after testing her devotion by submitting for a while to the resentment of his rival, and by a pretended caprice in favor of a singing girl, who accompanies her, he marries her, and then saves her from the flames as she is about to be burned for marrying beneath her *caste*. Taglioni’s part is all pantomime. She does not speak during the play, but her motion is more than articulate. Her first appearance was in a troop of Indian dancing girls, who performed before the prince in the public square. At a signal from the vizier a side pavilion opened, and thirty or forty bayaderes glided out together, and commenced an intricate dance. They were received with a tremendous round of applause from the audience; but, with the exception of a little more elegance in the four who led the dance, they were dressed nearly alike; and as I saw no particularly conspicuous figure, I presumed that Taglioni had not yet appeared. The splendor of the spectacle bewildered me for the first moment or two, but I presently found my eyes rivetted to a childish creature floating about among the rest, and taking her for some beautiful young *élève* making her first essays in the chorus, I interpreted her extraordinary fascination as a triumph of nature over my unsophisticated taste; and wondered to myself whether, after all, I should be half so much captivated with the show of skill I expected presently to witness. *This was Taglioni!* She came forward directly, in a *pas seul*, and I then observed that her dress was distinguished from that of her companions by its extreme modesty both of fashion and ornament, and the unconstrained ease with which it adapted itself to her shape and motion. She looks not more than fifteen. Her figure is small, but rounded to the very last degree of perfection; not a muscle swelled beyond the exquisite outline; not an angle, not a fault. Her back and neck, those points so rarely beautiful in woman, are faultlessly formed; her feet and hands are in full proportion to her size, and the former play as freely and with as natural a yieldingness in her fairy slippers, as if they were accustomed only to the dainty uses of a drawing-room. Her face is most strangely interesting; not quite beautiful, but of that half-appealing, half-retiring sweetness that you sometimes see blended with the secluded reserve and unconscious refinement of a young girl just “out” in a circle of high fashion. In her greatest exertions her features retain the same timid half smile, and she returns to the alternate by-play of her part without the slightest change of color, or the slightest perceptible difference in her breathing, or in the ease of her look and posture. No language can describe her motion. She swims in your eye like a curl of smoke, or a flake of down. Her difficulty seems to be to keep to the floor. You have the feeling while you gaze upon her, that, if she were to rise and float away like Ariel, you would scarce be surprised. And yet all is done with such a childish unconsciousness of admiration, such a total absence of exertion or fatigue, that the delight with which she fills you is unmingled; and, assured as you are by the perfect purity of every look and attitude, that her hitherto spotless reputation is deserved beyond a breath of suspicion, you leave her with as much respect as admiration; and find with surprise that a dancing girl, who is exposed night after night to a profaning gaze of the world, has crept into one of the most sacred niches of your memory.

“Pencilings by the Way” by N. P. Willis.

Inscription from reverse side of photograph on page opposite.

La Jolie Bayadère d'1832
La grande
Mad Taglioni
viduée - né 1804
Antoine Gilbert & Fils



A few lines may be spared to chronicle the death in the same year (1884) of Madame Taglioni, the most famous dancer that ever moved on a stage. She made her first appearance in London in 1829, and all London and all England went wild over her, as the whole European continent had done. In the later years of her life she visited London a good deal, and she maintained herself by giving lessons in dancing. She was then quite an old woman, sweet and grave in manner, and who carried with her no reminder of the extraordinary brilliancy of her past career. One who met her at a house in London on the evening of a great Epsom day happened to ask her if she had ever seen the Derby. Her answer was pathetic in its very unconsciousness. She said that she had seen the Derby more than once "*dans ma jeunesse*." *Dans ma jeunesse!* Such a youth, such a brilliant time, with emperors and kings for her patrons, and whole populations in rhapsody of enthusiasm about her! She bore her old age gracefully, and did not seem in the least embittered by her obscurity and her decline . . .

History of Our Own Times, Justin McCarthy (London)



The San Carlo Theatre of Naples where Cerrito made her debut, 1835, in "L'Oroscopo."

But at Milan it was another story. The divine Taglioni and Mlle. Ceritto took turns dancing at La Scala. Here was something to really get worked up about. The enthusiasm shown night after night surpasses the powers of the imagination, and I shall resist the temptation of describing it before seeing it. The firm structure of the hall attests the highest tribute to its architect, for it has withstood the most dreadful ordeals of this dilletantism during three whole months. Fortunately it all happened in Northern Italy where the German influence may have contributed a degree of restraint.

At Florence the public was divided between two dancers, one tall, the other petite. It was another war of the Montagues and Capulets. Bouquets gave place to super-bouquets, then wreaths, and there was apprehension lest the two subjects perish—smothered under a deluge of flowers. Luxury ran riot; a follower of the tall dancer threw silver-wreathed leaves. Friends of the smaller hurled leaves of gold. One evening a bundle all tied up landed on the stage: it was a velvet robe. Nothing daunted the other faction answered the next evening with a Cashmere shawl. It was already rumored in the city that a certain lord baron, leader of one group, was conniving ways and means of letting in upon the proscenium a four horse coach with driver, which doubtless would have been countered with an actual castle complete with turrets and moats. The end of the dramatic year put a stop to this magnificent crescendo.

Paul De Musset "Voyage en Italie, (ca. 1843)

Fanny Cerrito

In the course of the renaissance of ballet in recent years at least two books apiece have been devoted to each of those dancers who form what is generally regarded as the triumvirate of the Romantic Ballet,—Taglioni, Elssler, and Carlotta Grisi. None about Cerrito. But perhaps to some her youthful naiad figure may have emerged distinct from the shadows of her sister ballerinas; indeed, to us with such vividness and conviction as to come to life in the present in such a way as to transform many a common place experience with an unexpected and overwhelming measure of her gracious art.

Limitations of space allow the presentation of but a fraction of a boxed homage-album to this dancer, eventually to house, besides a modern treatment, a museum of contemporary descriptions, action poses, portraits, press notices; "compensation" costume fragments, photographs, "reconstructed" memorabilia, etc. Museum excerpts only are presented here.



To conjure, even for a moment, the wistfulness which is the past is like trying to gather in one's arms the hyacinthine color of the distance.

The past is only the present become invisible and mute; and because it is invisible and mute, its memoried glances and its murmers are infinitely precious. We are tomorrow's past. Even now we slip away like those pictures painted on the moving dials of antique clocks—a ship, a cottage, sun and moon, a nosegay. The dial turns, the ship rides up and sinks again, the yellow painted sun has set, and we, that were the new thing, gather magic as we go.

Mary Webb from foreword to "Precious Bane,"
Jonathon Cape, London.

THE FRONTISPIECE portrait (inside cover) shows Fanny Cerrito between the years 1855 and 1860 and, it is easily possible, from new light shed on her career by Mr. George Chaffee in "The Romantic Ballet In London" (Dance Index—Vol. II, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12), before her dancing days were over. This photograph falls exactly halfway between the Kriehuber lithograph above (1842) and the cartes-de-visites of Cerrito in retirement (1875) in the Harvard Theatre Collection.

. . . we should mention Francesca Cerito, whose début had taken place at the Scala, in Milan, and who owes her success to the famous pas de quatre, which she danced in London in company with Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, and Lucille Grahn. No one carried farther than Cerito the love of her art. In order to preserve the graceful outline of her knees, she always slept in a certain position, with her feet strapped to the bed-post.

Magazine article by Rosita Mauri (1895)



Jerome Bonaparte.

Louis Napoleon was taken sick at Compiegne, and for some hours the household were much alarmed. The chances of the possibility of establishing Jerome were earnestly canvassed, but the application of leeches saved us from that miserable realization. I will not undertake to say how many times the Emperor was shot at during his sojourn in the North; everyday brought forth some new revolver or infernal machine. The papers are never allowed to mention any illness or indisposition of the Emperor's, in the present tense. They are never permitted to say the Emperor *is* sick. When he has recovered, the intelligence is made public. So that those who are not in the way of hearing verbal news, learn of his convalescence before they heard of his being unwell. The *Moniteur* is less scrupulous when Jerome's maladies are concerned, and announced the other day, with a painful bluntness, that that gentleman was in bed with the grippe, and could not receive on Wednesday evening. He may have been too sick to see company, but he was not too sick to see Cerrito, and was present at the *rentreé* of that delightful danseuse, in the new ballet of Orfa.

January 6th, 1853.

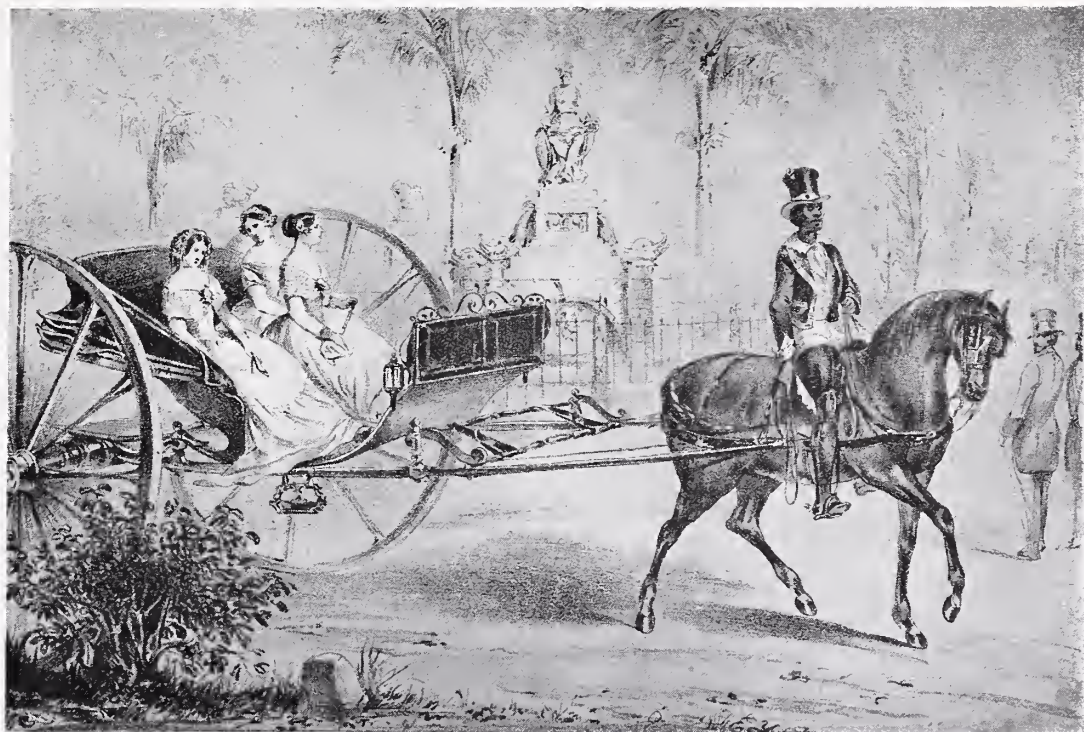
Typographical Note

Cerito, Cerrito, Ceritto, Cerritto, Cherito,—same person.

Mlle. Cerito in the Lithuanian??? (*Pre-stroboscopic Vision*)

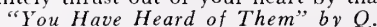
Another illustration occurs in the history of Jedediah Buxton, the plowman, of wonderful arithmetical capacities. You might have given him the size of the circumference of a wheel, and he would have told you on the spot how many circumvolutions it would make in going round the globe. This was his only forte. In almost all other points he was deficient. As usual in England, they lionized the plowman. Among other places, they took him to the Opera. Upon inquiring what he thought of the celebrated dancer, he replied, "Wonderful! she danced . . . steps in so many minutes!" That was all that he had attended to; that was all that he remembered. The gracefulness, the attitudes, the science were all thrown away on him, and would be soon forgotten. Only in his own particular department of numbers, where his attention was stimulated by habit, did he see or remember anything.

Prefatory Observations to Mons. Zaba's Lecture on Polish Mnemonics by Frederick W. Robertson, M.A.



Carriages and Crinolines (Fanny Cerrito Album)

Inscribed in a Victorian hand at the beginning of the music,—“outrageously hard but perfectly lovely.”



ALF. GIBB.

Annotation.

ANTHONY C. TIOX.

devereux

Alegretti.

D. A. C. N. 5721

CEAHTFO.

8:3

MODERATO.

WANTH ELSTER.

A1. J. FORD.

D & C, No. 8724

Page de Quatre



Romantic period lithograph from sheet music cover.



The Shadow Dance from "Midsummer Night's Dream" on Stereoscope card. (ca. 1870)



Nora Kaye, Alicia Markova, Annabelle Lyon, and Irina Baronova in 1942 revival. (Photo by Dr. Hans von Kuffner.)



Pablo Picasso

Pas Seul

It was that hour just before sunrise when the world seems absolutely colorless, when it gives indeed a sense of negation of color. The rich hues of night have withdrawn, oozed away like the waves from a shore, and all the colors of daytime lie dormant in the landscape like in the paints used for pottery, which are all alike gray clay until they come out in the furnace. And in this still world there is a tremendous promise.

The old man, gray in his gray cloak, would have been nearly invisible even to somebody looking for him. In fact he felt extremely lonely, as if he knew that he could not be seen. He dared not put his hand to the shutter for fear of making a noise. With his hands on his back he leaned forward and peeped in.

He had hardly ever been more surprised. The long gardenroom with its three French windows opening on to the terrace was painted a sky blue, much faded with time. There was but little furniture in the room, and what there was had been pushed back against the walls. But from the ceiling in the middle of the room hung a fine old chandelier, and it was all ablaze, every candle in it being lighted. The big Russian music box was open, placed upon the old dumb spinet, and was pouring forth in high clear notes the tune of a mazurka.

The young mistress of the house stood on the tips of her toes in the middle of the room. She had on the very short diaphanous frock of a ballet dancer, and her little heelless shoes were fastened with black ribbons laced around her delicate ankles and legs. She held her arms over her head, gracefully rounded, and stood quite still, watching the music, her face like the placid, happy face of a doll.

As her bar of music fell in, she suddenly came to life. She lifted her right leg slowly, slowly, the toe pointing straight at the Councilor, higher and higher, as if she were really rising from the ground and about to fly. Then she brought it down again, slowly, slowly, on the tip of the toe, with a little gentle pat, no more than a fingertap upon the table.

The spectator outside held his breath. As before, on watching the ballet at Vienna, he had the feeling that this was too much; it could not be done. And then it was done, lightly, as in jest. One begins to doubt the fall of man, and not to worry about it, when a young dancer can thus rise from it again.

Standing upon the tip of her right toe now, she lifted her left leg, slowly, high up, opened her arms in a swift audacious movement, whirled all around herself, and began to dance. The dance was more than a real mazurka, very fiery and light, lasting perhaps two minutes: a humming top, a flower, a flame dancing, a play upon the law of gravitation, a piece of celestial drollery. It was also a bit of acting: love, sweet innocence, tears, a *sursum cordae* expressed in music and movement. In the middle of it there was a little pause to frighten the audience, but it went on all the same, only even more admirably, as if transposed into a higher key. Just as the music box gave signs of running down, she looked straight at the Councilor and sank down upon the floor in a graceful heap, like a flower flung stem upward, exactly as if her legs had been cut off with a pair of scissors.

The Councilor knew enough about the art of the ballet to value this as a very high class performance. He knew enough about the pretty things in life altogether to value this early morning apparition altogether as a vision worthy of the Czar Alexander himself, if it came to that.

At her direct clear glance he took alarm and drew back a little. When he looked in again she had got up, but remained as if irresolute, and did not turn on the box again. There was a long mirror in the room. Pressing the palm of her hand gently upon the glass she bent forward and kissed her own silvery image within it. Then she took up a long extinguisher, and one by one she put out the candles of the chandelier. She opened the door and was gone.



Mosaïque of Swiss scenes. Drawn by Rudolph Topfer (ca. 1839) (From Fanny Cerrito Album)

"I shall conclude by making an oration in praise of the highly talented Madame Batavia; no language can do justice to her inimitable powers as a danseuse; first she bounded on three legs, then upon two, afterward upon one side, then changed to the other, now on cross-legs, and then ended by hopping about upon one. Not even Taglioni herself, who is certainly highly accomplished in the use of her legs, will ever be able to arrive at this grade of perfection, for a most palpable reason because she has but two!"
of 'Madame Batavia, charming poodle and
darling of the public'

Tutti Frutti by Prince Pückler-Muskau (ca. 1832).

